

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 13281

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJ: EXTENT OF INTELLIGENCE SERVICE REFORMS STILL UNCLEAR

SUMMARY: WITHOUT SPECIFYING NATURE OF CHANGES, ANDREOTTI HAS COMMITTED HIS GOVERNMENT TO INTRODUCING DRAFT LEGISLATION ON REFORM OF INTELLIGENCE SERVICE (SID) BY OCTOBER 15. RECENT PRESS ARTICLES ASSERT THAT REFORMS WILL BE FAR-REACHING, PROVIDING FOR TRANSFER OF ENTIRE INTERNAL SECURITY FUNCTION FROM SID TO INTERIOR MINISTRY'S CIVILIAN CONTROL. INTERIOR MINISTRY SOURCES DENY, HOWEVER, THAT ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT WILL AGREE TO PROPOSE SUCH DRASTIC CHANGES, AND ATTRIBUTE PRESS STORIES TO INTERIOR MINISTER COSSIGA'S DESIRE TO ENHANCE HIS OWN POSITION. END SUMMARY.

1. DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL THAT ONE OF THE ELEMENTS OF ANDREOTTI'S GOVERNMENT PROGRAM WAS THE REFORM OF THE ITALIAN INTELLIGENCE SERVICE (SID) WHICH HAS COME UNDER REPEATED CRITICISM FOR ALLEGED EXTRA-LEGAL ACTIVITIES AND INEFFICIENCY. IN HIS SPEECH TO THE SENATE ON AUGUST 4, ANDREOTTI PROVIDED FEW SPECIFICS, HOWEVER, OF WHAT THE REFORMS MIGHT ENTAIL. HE MERELY SAID THAT DRAFT LEGISLATION WOULD BE PRESENTED TO PARLIAMENT BY OCTOBER

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15.

2. WITHIN THE LAST FEW DAYS, BEGINNING WITH A FRONT-PAGE ARTICLE IN CORRIERE DELLA SERA AUGUST 11, A SPATE OF PRESS ARTICLES HAS APPEARED ON THE PROPOSED REFORMS, PURPORTING TO REFLECT THE GOVERNMENT'S INTENTIONS. IN UNGUARDED, FACTUAL TERMS, THESE ARTICLES STATE THAT SID'S ENTIRE INTERNAL SECURITY FUNCTION (SECTION D) WILL BE TRANSFERRED TO CIVILIAN AUTHORITY WITHIN THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR.

3. THE ARTICLES ARE BASED IN PART OF A DECREE JUST ISSUED BY THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR WHICH RENAMES THE SMALL 100-MAN GENERAL ANTI-TERRORISM DIRECTORATE AS THE "SERVIZIO DI SICUREZZA(SDS)--SECURITY SERVICE. ASKED ABOUT THE CHANGE IN NAME, INTERIOR MINISTER COSSIGA REPORTEDLY SAID THAT IT WAS DESIREABLE THAT THE ITALIAN SECURITY UNIT EMPLOY THE SAME NAME USED BY SIMILAR SERVICES IN EC COUNTRIES. THE ARTICLES GO ON TO STATE, HOWEVER, THAT THE CHANGE IN NOMENCLATURE IS REALLY MORE SIGNIFICANT IN THAT IT FORESHADOWS THE TRANSFER OF SID'S INTERNAL SECURITY FUNCTION TO THE INTERIOR MINISTRY'S EXPANDED SDS UNIT. THE PRESS REPORTS STATE THAT SID WILL BE LEFT WITH RESPONSIBILITY ONLY FOR COUNTER-ESPIONAGE AND EXTERNAL INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES.

4. MINISTRY OF INTERIOR SOURCES DENY, HOWEVER, THAT ANY DECISION HAS BEEN TAKEN TO GUT SID OF ITS LARGEST FUNCTION--INTERNAL SECURITY. THEY STATE THAT MINISTER COSSIGA DIRECTLY INSPIRED THE PRESS STORIES IN ORDER TO PROMOTE CHANGES THAT WOULD ENHANCE THE POWER OF HIS MINISTRY. THEY INSIST, HOWEVER, THAT ANDREOTTI HAS BY NO MEANS AGREED TO A WHOLESALE TRANSFER OF INTERNAL SECURITY TO THE SDS. THEY SEE THE MOST LIKELY SOLUTION AS A COMPROMISE WHEREBY CERTAIN SID INTERNAL SECURITY FUNCTIONS WILL BE TRANSFERRED TO SDS AS PART OF THE REFORM PACKAGE. IN PARTICULAR, THEY STATE THAT THERE IS NO AGREEMENT (AS ALLEGED BY THE PRESS STORIES) TO ESTABLISH AN INTER-MINISTERIAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE TO PROVIDE POLITICAL CONTROL OVER THE MILITARY (SID) AND CIVILIAN (SDS) SECURITY SERVICES.

5. COMMENT: SHOULD THE INTERNAL SECURITY FUNCTION BE TRANSFERRED TO CIVILIAN CONTROL AS OUTLINED IN THE COSSIGA-INSPIRED PRESS ARTICLES, THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CHANGE WOULD BE CONSIDER-CONFIDENTIAL

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ABLE. FOR ONE, INTERNAL SECURITY WOULD COME UNDER MORE DIRECT POLITICAL CONTROL THAN IN SID. MORE IMPORTANTLY, THE POSSIBILITIES FOR COMMUNIST PENETRATION OF THE INTERNAL SECURITY APPARATUS WITHIN THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR COULD BE EXPECTED TO BE SIGNIFICANTLY GREATER. VOLPE

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